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## CONDITIONS AFFECTING THE SUFFRAGE IN COLONIES

The question of suffrage occupies a significant position in the general field of colonial government. While usually considered as a single problem, it is in reality made up of several important questions. In the first place, should suffrage qualifications be determined by the colony or by the mother country? On this point there is comparatively little difference of opinion. Since the home government is ultimately held responsible for the progress and development of the colony, it is only natural that the mother country should fix the suffrage qualifications in such a way as to subserve these ends and to prevent dangerous political disturbance. It is, therefore, only in the more advanced and highly-developed colonies, where political as well as economic progress has been attained, that the determination of these qualifications is to be safely entrusted to the colonial government. While Canada, for instance, is permitted to define her own suffrage qualifications, in the great body of English colonies these are determined by the imperial legislature. In the next place, it may be asked, are there certain conditions which require particular suffrage qualifications? Do tropical conditions call for a different arrangement of the suffrage than the 'emperate climates? Under what circumstances is a property or an educational qualification respectively required, and how far do racial characteristics enter into the determination of the franchise? While these questions cannot be answered satisfactorily by the formulation of general rules, it is, nevertheless, of interest to examine the various ways in which a solution has been attempted, as well as the degree of success obtained.

It will be generally agreed that where the resources of the colony are undeveloped and civilization has not advanced to any considerable extent, the suffrage qualifications should be

so arranged as to make it possible for only a small percentage of the population to vote. And, conversely, high economic and social development will lead to the inference of wide participation in the franchise. The basis of self-government being at hand, the natural product can be realized.

In fact, the real point at issue in all the questions propounded above is as to how far the system of government and the extent of the franchise necessarily involved in it are dependent upon economic conditions and upon racial characteristics. Or, to state the problem in still broader terms, how far are political questions dependent upon environment and upon heredity? Those two forces constantly interact upon one another—now one exerting the predominant influence and now the other. The state of industry, with its natural physical basis in such elementary conditions as soil, climate, surface and minerals, may have developed so far as to call forth latent powers in the population scarcely expected. With the development of commerce there comes an influx of democratic ideas due to the intermingling of various types of men through business interests.

Liberal ideas are bound to spread under these circumstances and political development is affected by the general democratic influences. This is but one instance, out of many, that might be chosen to illustrate the point. The nature of the suffrage qualifications must be largely modified by the environment, both on its industrial and physical side.

On the other hand, these environmental factors are slow in operating and sometimes exert little effect for long periods of time. Indeed, in some cases their influence may be hardly noticeable and the hereditary forces may long be uppermost in the struggle between the two. The attitude of mind and habits of thought developed by subjection to influences extended over long periods of time are extremely difficult to eradicate. They find expression in racial characteristics and are everywhere recognized as vitally affecting political government.

The relation of these different factors in the problem of suffrage is well brought out in English experience in colonial government. Before analyzing the influences affecting the suffrage qualifications in the new dependencies of the United States, it may be well to examine the conditions existing in some of the more important English colonies.

In Australia, the colonies of New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland possess practically universal suffrage—there being neither a property nor an educational qualification for the election of members of the legislative assembly. The physical and social conditions which form the basis of this system are easily discernible. The climate is such as to permit the existence and survival of an efficient type of man, there is a well-organized system of industry, production has advanced to a point where general prosperity prevails and the resources of the colonies are well utilized. Sufficient means of communication have been established to disseminate common political ideas, to make possible common standards and general interests and to provide bonds for uniting the different parts of the country into a homogeneous whole. The character of the population denotes a considerable degree of intelligence and capacity for self-government, and the original inhabitants make up a very small percentage of the total population. With British subjects constituting almost the entire population, and with the consequent prevalence of English ideas and habits of thought representing a long and continuous development of civil and political liberty, it is possible to establish successfully a broad and liberal suffrage. Now if we contrast Australia with Jamaica, we observe a problem of a totally different character, a problem which has been solved by the establishment of a property qualification in order to exclude the incapable element from political activity. On account of social and physical conditions, the suffrage in a tropical colony frequently requires a different regulation from that in a more temperate dependency. The soil and climate affect the character of industry and type of man to be dealt

with, and this in turn reacts upon the political capacity of the individual. Jamaica's decline in fortune is now generally conceded to have been caused by lack of cheap, efficient labor, and the failure of the cane sugar industry. These have caused economic distress and consequent political discontent. In addition, the negro forms the great bulk of the population—the whites constituting only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of the total number of the inhabitants. England has therefore employed the property qualification to prevent the ultra-radical classes from securing political control. With the increasing decadence of economic conditions, even this safeguard has proved insufficient, and the powers of the elected legislators have been counteracted by the appointed members of the council.

In Cape Colony, also, the conditions are widely different, in some respects, from those prevailing in Australia and somewhat resemble, so far as the constituent elements of the population are concerned, the conditions existing in Jamaica. There is a fair degree of prosperity and the climate is more suited to a high type of labor than in Jamaica. The products are largely agricultural and pastoral, but in addition there is considerable mining and some slight attempt at manufacturing. Roads and railways have also been opened and materially aid the growth of industry. But the character of the population is altogether different from that of the Australian colonies. A glance at New South Wales, the foremost colony of Australia, will serve to illustrate this. In that colony, out of a population of over one million and a quarter, only seven thousand are aborigines and half-castes. But in Cape Colony three-fourths of the population are negroes or half-breeds, possessing little or no education. While about two-thirds of the European population are able to read and write, only 7 per cent of the colored races are so qualified. Under these conditions, therefore, a wide extension of the franchise would be incompatible with efficient government. The

property qualification was consequently prescribed, and no one allowed to be newly-registered as a voter who could not sign his name and write his address and occupation. England thus employed here both the property and educational qualifications to secure an intelligent and capable electorate.

Although our political ideals have been those of equality and political liberty, we have, nevertheless, consciously or unconsciously, followed the example set by Great Britain in the determination of suffrage qualifications for colonial dependencies. This is not to be attributed to imitation, but to the necessities of the case. However tenaciously a nation may cling to the ideal of political equality, such an ideal can only be realized in localities where the foundations of equality exist. Recognizing the force of this, the United States has employed the educational and property qualifications in fixing the conditions necessary for the enjoyment of the franchise in colonial possessions. As the educational test is exclusively employed in Hawaii, it will be discussed first.

Hawaii is the most favorably situated of the lands recently acquired by the United States. Aside from the fact that the islands had become extensively Americanized before their annexation, their physical environment is favorable to economic advance and political growth to a great degree unusual in a tropical country. Although situated in the tropics, the temperature is so modified by trade winds and ocean currents as to produce a climate distinctly different from other regions in the same latitude. The average temperature, 75 degrees, is thus probably reduced ten degrees below the normal temperature of countries similarly situated. Although the islands are mountainous and volcanic in origin, the soil is highly fertile and productive—the lava decomposing into rich red soils particularly adapted to the cultivation of sugar. This sound agricultural basis is of the first importance to Hawaii, as the comparative lack of coal and minerals prevents the extensive development of mining and

manufacturing industries. In fact, agriculture constitutes the industrial backbone of the islands, capital being almost exclusively engaged in the cultivation of sugar-cane. A reference to trade statistics will best illustrate the paramount importance of this product. In 1897, out of total exports to the value of \$16,021,775, the exportation of sugar amounted to \$15,390,223, while nearly one-quarter of the total population was employed on sugar plantations. Practically all of this trade went to the United States. The islands are thus dependent upon the market of the mainland and have become subject largely to American influences which are contributing much to the general prosperity and development of the country. In the establishment of railroads and better means of communication, American enterprise has also been brought to bear, although much still remains to be done in this direction.

Closely connected with the economic life, and the consequent political possibilities of Hawaii, are the labor conditions prevailing in the islands. This brings us to the general question of the population of the islands, its character and the relative numerical strength of its elements—a question upon which so much depends in the determination of suffrage qualifications. According to the census of 1896, the population of the islands amounted to 109,020. Of this number the Hawaiians came first with a population of 39,504; the Japanese second, 24,407; the Chinese third, 21,616; and the Portuguese fourth, 15,919. Only three thousand (3,086) are Americans, and Europeans constitute the remainder of the population. Although a small minority, the Americans have practically controlled the affairs of the island and, together with the British and Germans, managed the business relations of the archipelago. The bulk of the agricultural work is performed by the Japanese and Chinese, the native Hawaiians being averse to plantation labor and having a preference for personal service. One-half of the Japanese and over one-third of the Chinese are employed on

the sugar plantations. Originally the Hawaiians themselves worked on the plantations, but as the demand for agricultural labor increased after the expansion of the sugar industry in 1875, when a reciprocity treaty was made with the United States, they were unable to meet the new demands for labor, and the planters were therefore forced to look elsewhere for the required supply. An unfortunate experience in the violation of labor agreements led to the introduction of a contract system of labor, in order that the planters might be protected at a time when it was absolutely necessary that a sufficient supply of labor should be at hand to carry on the operations of the sugar industry. A proper understanding of this is necessary to explain the existence of such a large number of Asiatics on the islands, and the effect in turn upon industrial and political conditions. This contract system, which furnishes house rent and weekly wages of three dollars, attracts a comparatively low type of labor and sets a low standard of living. But a high political development of the islands can only be fully realized by the introduction of efficient labor and a high standard of life. The productive power of such labor is relatively much greater than the temporary additional expense entailed in increased wages. As has been shown, climatic conditions also are favorable to white labor, since the islands are tropical only in so far as latitude is concerned. However, the actual as well as the formal control of the islands by the United States, and the consequent probable application of American methods of industrial enterprise, will exert an influence tending to replace the lower type of labor for the higher and more efficient.

The natives, composing nearly two-fifths of the entire population, are necessarily an important factor in the social conditions prevailing in the islands. Upon their character will depend, in large part, the determination of the suffrage qualifications. The decrease in the number of natives, brought about chiefly by disease, has done much, however, to affect their importance in territorial affairs. Those



that have survived are of a kindly disposition and obedient to law, although not highly industrious. Naturally it is difficult to eradicate traits and dispositions acquired in a primitive state, and it would be unreasonable to expect no trace of them to remain. But great transformations have been wrought in the native through the combined influence of missionaries, intermarriage and education. The moderate treatment which he has received at the hands of foreigners was begun by the missionaries, and Christianity also accomplished much in modifying his naturally easy-going disposition. Intermarriage with Mongolians and Caucasians has considerably changed the physical and mental characteristics of the native, and helped to establish a community of interests throughout the island which reacts to the advantage of the community and native alike. Finally education, begun by the missionaries and afterwards undertaken by the government has materially benefited the native. A system of public schools (in which English is the medium of expression), high schools, colleges and industrial schools, have been established. Education is compulsory between the ages of six and fifteen, and one-eighth of the total budget is devoted to the support of the schools. Fifty per cent of the teachers are Americans, and American methods are employed in teaching. In consequence of this thorough attention to education, Hawaii has a high percentage of literacy, 64 per cent of the population being able to read and write. But, in reality, the percentage among the native Hawaiians is much higher (84 per cent), because the lack of education among the Asiatics and Portuguese reduces the general average. In this way a great transformation is being worked in the original native, making natives more intelligent and less intemperate. But naturally he still retains traces of the former indolence, and must undergo further development in order to assert himself in industry or politics.

These, then, were the chief industrial and social conditions

prevailing in the islands at the time of their annexation to the United States. From what has been said, it will be seen that Hawaii possessed factors which warranted some degree of local autonomy, although the conditions undoubtedly required a limitation of the suffrage in order to secure efficient government. The islands were prosperous because of their great sugar interests, which had been brought into close relation with the United States. The general level of education was also relatively high. There had been little governmental oppression, and a general community of interests was being formed. But the people had not sufficient training in self-government and the population contained a large number of Asiatics not in harmony with the best interests of the islands. The native, although intelligent, was not aroused to the full sense of industrial and political responsibilities. The Act of April 30, 1900, providing a government for the territory of Hawaii, attempts to meet these conditions. It confers a measure of local self-government, and, at the same time, employs means to bring the administration of Hawaiian affairs into harmony with American ideas and institutions. Although Hawaii is prosperous and educated, it is hardly necessary, in the light of the conditions just reviewed, to say that universal suffrage at present would not be in harmony with the best interests of the islands. The exclusion of the Asiatics, representing, as they do, the most un-American ideas, is essential, and is easily accomplished by permitting only citizens of the United States to vote. The extent, however, to which the native is to be enfranchised is another question altogether. Constituting two-fifths of the population, his position is totally different from that of the native in Australia, where England is able to permit manhood suffrage. He occupies, however, a position less important numerically than the colored race in Jamaica, where property, or in Cape Colony, where educational qualifications are provided. But his educational development is vastly superior to theirs, and the problem is,

therefore, less difficult to solve. Lack of industrial development and political training is his chief drawback. It is consequently necessary to exclude the most inefficient from political participation in order to secure order and stability in government. The means more often employed by England to accomplish this is the property qualification. But the United States has taken the view that intelligence in voting may be secured without insisting, at all times, upon the ownership of property.

Besides the usual qualifications of age, citizenship, residence and registration, the additional test of ability to speak, read and write the English language has been established. But it is a question whether, in the long run, more good would not have been accomplished by requiring stricter tests or qualifications of a different character. If the object is to enfranchise as many of the inhabitants as possible, then it is well enough to take that qualification—education—which is most generally enjoyed, as a basis for the exercise of the franchise. But if the policy has in mind the development of certain necessary qualities which are still in a rudimentary state, so that by this higher development a real step in the direction of progress can be made, then it is a wiser policy to require conditions for the exercise of the franchise, which, though necessary for progress, are perhaps not strongly developed in the population. In other words, a premium is put on that condition which is essential for further progress in the community, but which, by reason of a backward state of development, is not generally possessed in the community. To apply this thought, education is the condition that is generally possessed by the natives of Hawaii, but industrial development does not exist to the same extent. The native is rather easy-going, and lacks industrial efficiency. A proper qualification might thus encourage the native to further effort in the line most needed—that of industry—so that by the possession of property he could enjoy the franchise.

Again, an educational test does not stand for the same national characteristics as a property qualification. With the ownership of property there usually goes a conservative disposition, but one may easily have the ability to read and write, and still lack the sense of political responsibility. In fact, a simple rudimentary education, such as mere ability to read and write, may often result in unsettled political ideas, unless accompanied by the disciplinary influence of industrial activity. Sound and efficient administration of government requires a certain measure of conservatism which the ownership of property almost invariably nourishes, because of the additional interests and responsibilities which its ownership entails.

The conditions in Porto Rico and the Philippines present to the United States a problem different in many respects from those of Hawaii. The long régime of Spanish influence in the former colonies, from which Hawaii was free, gave rise to distinctive economic, political and social characteristics, while the thoroughly tropical nature of the islands added a marked difference in the physical basis of government. Both possessions are situated in the heart of the tropics, Luzon being on the same parallel of latitude with Porto Rico. Since there are not as great modifying influences as in Hawaii, the climate is distinctly tropical, and the thermometer in Manila and San Juan frequently reaches 90 degrees, although the average temperature is lower in both cases. This fact produces a marked effect on individual vigor and industrial efficiency, reacting upon the welfare of the islands and placing them at a greater disadvantage than Hawaii. The soil is fertile and particularly adapted to the growth of tropical products. In the Philippines, the staple articles are hemp, copra from the cocoanut, sugar and tobacco. Together they constitute 97 per cent of the exports. In Porto Rico the most important products are coffee, sugar and tobacco, which constitute about 95 per cent of the exports. Some mineral deposits of coal, copper, gold and iron are known to

exist in both regions, but mines are not worked to any extent, in either. The islands, therefore, rely almost entirely upon agriculture as their principal source of industry and maintenance. But in this they have been handicapped and prevented from attaining a normal development, through lack of capital and efficient methods of production on the one hand, and the absence of a system of roads and communications on the other. The generally low level of industrial intelligence reacts upon the political life of the people and makes self-government difficult and precarious. To understand properly the situation as regards suffrage it will be well to examine briefly, in both territories, the general social conditions of the population.

The labor problem is a difficult one in the Philippine Islands. The native is an unsteady worker, not to be relied upon. A short spell of work is followed by an extended period of idleness, during which he enjoys the small amount accumulated from his labor. This dislike of systematic work has resulted in numerous industrial failures, and has finally led to the employment of Chinese labor. The low wages paid ranging from four to eight dollars per month, prevents all possibility of securing more efficient labor from other outside sources.

The factor of most vital political significance is the make-up and general character of the population. The number of inhabitants of the Philippine Islands is estimated at 8,000,000, and these are scattered over nearly 2,000 islands, with an area of over 164,000 square miles. They consist of about 25,000 Europeans and Americans, 125,000 Chinese and a great variety of tribes forming the great bulk of the population. These tribes belong to three races—the Negrito, Indonesian and Malayan. On account of the great number of tribes scattered over the archipelago, and beyond easy access in many instances, it is difficult to get an exact estimate of their relative numbers. But the Schurman Commission placed the number of Negritos at 25,000; the Indo-

nesians at 250,000 and the Malays at over six millions. The Negritos are short, black and of a primitive character, roaming around in the mountainous regions and manifesting no inclination for mental improvement. The Indonesians are light in color and physically superior to the Negritos, and some are rather intelligent. As these two races are, for the most part, indolent and peaceful, manifesting little preference for any particular form of government, the United States has had no serious trouble with them. The Malays are of medium height and commonly designated Filipinos. The Tagals and Visayans are the most important and dominant tribes of this race. They are rather industrious and patriotic, and from them has chiefly come the resistance to the United States. Taken together, these races are split up into more than eighty tribes; the numbers within the more advanced tribes are greater, taken as a whole, than those farther down in the scale of civilization. The most undeveloped are deficient, both morally and mentally, and manifest cunning, treachery and cruelty. Polygamy and slavery have also been practiced by them. On the other hand, the more advanced tribes are Christianized and possess considerable mental capacity. While these tribes are fewer in number, they, nevertheless, constitute the majority of the population. It is this striking difference in tribal characteristics that accounts for such radically different estimates of the character of the natives that have been frequently given. It is almost impossible to arrive at a general characterization of the people that will not reflect what is true of only a portion of the population.

It is frequently asserted that the Filipinos, in so far as natural capacity is concerned, possess the possibilities of advancement, present a fair degree of civilization—having embraced Christianity—and become more or less acquainted with many civilized customs and usages. But, at the same time, no one denies that ignorance and illiteracy prevail almost everywhere. This is due to the most inadequate system of public

instruction formerly provided by the Spanish authorities. According to the former law, every five thousand inhabitants were to be provided with one male and one female teacher—instruction to boys and girls being given separately. That is, for every twenty-five hundred inhabitants there should be one teacher. But even this inadequate provision was not carried out. The report of the Schurman Commission shows that there was only one teacher for every 4,179 inhabitants and where the population was densest, the lack of educational facilities was greatest. In failing to establish sufficient schools and excusing parents on that ground from sending their children to school, the Spanish law rather aided the spread of illiteracy than the growth of education. The small compensation paid to teachers likewise acted to the disadvantage of the educational system by preventing the proper type of individual from entering the field. A comprehension of these deficiencies in the school system will make clear the ability of the Filipino for self-government and the proper exercise of the franchise.

It is almost a truism to say that the success of democratic principles applied to government depends primarily upon the educational opportunities of the masses, or that where such are lacking, the possibility of a widely-extended suffrage and local self-government is vague and shadowy. Therefore, the problem of the United States in establishing the required educational foundation, is one of the most important factors in its successful solution of the Philippine suffrage problem. Already attempts are being made to bring about improvement in this direction. A centralized school system with adequate means of instruction and school facilities, with a language basis of English, is being inaugurated and will finally exercise a potent influence in the up-building of the islands.

But there are other elements, besides illiteracy, making a widely extended franchise impracticable. Attention has already been called to the great number of tribes existing in the islands, which makes it impossible for the people to

become an unified nation. They are only an aggregation of different groups with diverse languages, laws and customs. No national homogeneity can be realized while such fundamental differences exist. There is no consistent basis on which to build. The people are still largely in the tribal stage of development and their sympathies are confined to the narrow unit. The concept of nationality has remained undeveloped in them.

Another difficulty in the political situation is their lack of actual experience in the art of government. Under the Spanish régime, the system of administration was one of complete centralization and almost no opportunity was given to the vast majority of the inhabitants to secure political training. The suffrage was so restricted that only an insignificant portion of the population was admitted to the electoral body. In the towns, where the elections occurred, only those that were known as the "principalia" were permitted to vote. This body was made up of past and present office-holders and individuals paying an annual land tax of fifty dollars. The right of those who paid a tax of equal amount on personal property, or an equal sum in the form of business taxes, and the right of professional men to vote, was not recognized. Thus, only the intensely conservative classes were admitted to the franchise, and individuals thoroughly capable of exercising this privilege were disqualified. The radical and even the progressive elements of the people were excluded from the franchise. But the voting power possessed by the principalia amounted to little on account of the highly-centralized system of administration in the government of the archipelago, whereby the Governor-general and his subordinates controlled the actions of the local bodies. The free expression of the popular will was also hindered by the close connection between the religious orders and the state, whereby the friars exercised so strong an influence in political affairs.

With this résumé of the conditions in the islands, we are



able to see the difficulties to be confronted in any attempt to establish real representative government. We can understand, in some degree, the forces which should influence the determination of the suffrage qualifications. These qualifications at present consist, according to the enactment of the United States Philippine Commission, of the usual requisites of age, citizenship and residence, together with any one of the following special qualifications: (1) Ownership of real property to the value of 500 pesos or annual payment of at least thirty pesos of the established taxes; or (2) ability to speak, read and write the English or Spanish language; or (3) former tenure of certain official positions. The United States, therefore, has relied mainly upon the property or educational qualifications in attempting to secure an efficient electorate. Considering the great lack of industrial development, the general illiteracy in the islands, and the composite character of the population, with little, if any, political training for the masses, the conditions imposed are not burdensome. In fact, the question is whether they are stringent enough. It is safe to say that the English, would not, under such circumstances, have extended the franchise with such liberality. A "crown colony" form of government would probably have been provided at first. It seems to be intended for just such a territory, with undeveloped resources and a composite and untrained population. But it must be remembered, however, that the qualifications named apply only to the election of local officers. Nevertheless, even here, the advisability of such a policy is questionable. The attempted solution is only experimental after all, and experience has proved that in political experiments it is better to err on the safe side. That is, the imposition of strict conditions at first, in the exercise of the franchise and the gradual removal of the restraints, seem to yield better results than the pursuance of an opposite policy. The United States, in her missionary work of training politically undeveloped people for self-government, has taken an optimistic view of the

situation, but hereditary incapacity, the accumulated growth of generations, must be given due weight and consideration.

Turning now to Porto Rico, where the educational or property qualification is also optional, a similar examination will be made of the conditions which must determine the success or failure of the system of popular suffrage. Its physical basis has already been noticed. Like the Philippine Islands, Porto Rico is a tropical country possessed of abundant natural resources for the pursuit of agriculture. In fact, mining and manufacturing occupy an insignificant position in the island, the great majority of the people being employed in agricultural lines. The exact social condition of these laborers, and the general character of the population, will be of interest.

By the Spanish census of 1897, the population of Porto Rico was 890,820. They were divided into three classes—the whites, the mixed or mulattoes, and the blacks or pure-blooded negroes. The whites were considerably in the majority, constituting at that time about 64 per cent (573,096) of the entire population. The mulattoes numbered 27 per cent (241,895), and the pure negroes only 9 per cent (75,829). These last two classes are the survivors and descendants of those who were slaves in 1873, at which time they were set free. At the recent census taken by the United States, the make-up of the population was found to be essentially the same—the whites constituting over three-fifths of the number of the inhabitants. But there was an increase of 7 per cent in the total population, which now numbered 953,243.

It is shown by this census that Porto Rico is about as thickly populated as New Jersey, having 264 persons to the square mile. This is seven times as dense as Cuba's population. The census also shows that the percentage of people living in villages and rural districts is 91.3—which is a much greater proportion than in the United States, where only 7 per cent are in the rural districts. There are only two cities

with a population of over 25,000—San Juan with 32,000 and Ponce with 28,000.

The bulk of the people depend upon daily wages as a means of livelihood and, as stated, are agricultural laborers. These farm-hands are known as "peons" and are wretchedly paid—the usual wage being from thirty to forty cents a day during the busy season. They are ignorant, but polite, kind-hearted and sociable. They live, for the most part, in huts built of bark, sticks and canes, and almost destitute of furniture. A family of five or six occupies such a house of from two to three rooms. They are poorly clad and insufficiently fed on a diet of rice, plantains and occasionally, codfish. Wages are paid them at times in the form of paper-notes or tickets drawn upon the store of the proprietor, where prices are higher than in the towns. The laborer thus gets still less value for his money. The standard of living is consequently extremely low, and the natural result of being poorly housed, clothed and fed is manifested in the character of the labor, which is poor and lacks energetic motive. The people seem desirous, however, of obtaining employment, and it is claimed that it is the lack of capital which accounts for these adverse industrial conditions. Capital, then, is essential for the improvement of the laborer, and, as Commissioner Carroll says, "it is manifest that the great object to be gained (in the up-building of Porto Rico) is the raising of the working classes to a higher level of intelligence, of efficiency as laborers, of power and intelligence as citizens, and of comfort and enjoyment as social creatures." The condition of the artisans, living generally in towns, is an improvement over that of the agricultural laborers. Their wages are higher, ranging from \$1.25 to \$1.50 a day, and they are consequently better provided for and more intelligent.

The status of education in Porto Rico has been deplorable and the degree of illiteracy enormous. Reading and writing were unknown to the laborer, and education has been one

of the greatest needs of the island. By the recent United States census it was shown that 83.2 per cent of the population were absolute illiterates, and that 14.5 per cent could both read and write, while about  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent had a higher education. The reason for this extent of illiteracy is the very simple one of inadequate educational facilities, and inefficient methods of instruction. The system of education under the Spanish régime was most incomplete and the appropriations devoted to educational purposes most inadequate. No proper schools were provided and no sufficient educational appliances furnished. Ordinary houses were used for school purposes and teachers often neglected their duties for personal or domestic reasons. Under the circumstances, therefore, the illiteracy was a natural product of existing conditions. But the advent of the United States into the field has already worked great changes, and by constant and persistent effort the educational status of the inhabitants is being gradually raised.

From these economic and social conditions, it can readily be inferred that high expectations on the score of a liberal voting franchise would be unjustifiable in Porto Rico. Furthermore, Spain has never been noted for inculcating ideas and habits leading to political ability and independence. It has always been that nation's policy to administer governmental affairs as much as possible without consulting the wishes of the people. Particularly is this true of her colonial provinces.

There is not found in the Spanish system that regard for the welfare, for the economic and political independence of the colonists, that have characterized, whether voluntarily or not, the Anglo-Saxon development. As a rule, of late years, even with Crown colonies, the English government has not simply considered imperial benefit, regardless of popular interests. When there has been a clash of interests, the British government has, of course, often forced its view upon the colonies. But the whole line of English develop-

ment has been to raise the political standard of the people and to enlarge gradually their sphere of influence. It is true that this may be due as much to the political genius of the Anglo-Saxon as to the character of the British government itself. But, nevertheless, there has been manifested a spirit of compromise, even if forced by the nature of circumstances; there has been a willingness to recognize the force of facts which has led the government to conform to popular interests and to accept the inevitable before disastrous results occurred. This has been characteristic of English institutions. But with the Spaniard another type of man and government has been disclosed.

Government seems to be regarded more as an extraneous force and not as the natural outcome of social conditions. It is used for purposes of class or personal benefit and aggrandizement. Not only did the condition of the colonists of Porto Rico help to bring about a form of government practically destitute of local autonomy, but the government itself was so constituted and administered as to foster that end. A strong system of centralization deprived the colony of any degree of local independence and invested the government officials with authority to exert their influence in their own behalf regardless of popular interests. Thus the franchise, even if it had been widely extended under the Spanish régime, could have accomplished little real political training.

These considerations will throw light upon the suffrage problem and aid in furnishing a basis for rational judgment on the question. In addition to the usual age, citizenship and residence qualifications, the United States has provided an alternative property or educational test; that is, the ownership of real estate or of personal property to the value of twenty-five dollars, or ability to read and write, entitles any qualified person to vote. In these requirements, the United States attempted to regard, in part, the actual conditions existing in the island. Porto Rico, we have seen, does not enjoy a large measure of industrial prosperity and a general

diffusion of intelligence, which are necessary to make universal suffrage and general political independence successful. With 83 per cent of the total population unable to read and write, and a large mass of the agricultural laborers living on the margin of existence, with a generally low standard of life and the lack of development which that implies, it was necessary to debar the most incapable from participation in political activity. The property or educational test was intended to accomplish this purpose. But, in placing the property qualification at so low a value, and in permitting the educational test to be substituted for it, the greatest liberality was granted.

Although in time, with the establishment of the American educational system in the island, and the probable rapid growth of industry, brought about by an influx of American capital and by the development of an American market for Porto Rican goods, such qualifications may prove workable, at present it is doubtful whether the best results can be attained with these simple requisites. The property qualification, placed at so low a figure, is practically worthless as a check to the industrially undesirable. It cannot be a real safeguard, as it is not high enough to insure the likelihood of capacity and ability in those possessing it. Indeed, the purpose of the law may be easily frustrated by the ease with which such a small amount of property may be transferred from one to another. This appears actually to have been done in many cases, even at this early date. In short, the educational test is alternative with the property qualification, and the latter can be evaded. It must also be remembered that the hereditary impediments in the way of good administration are great and difficult to overcome. Anything which gives a loop-hole for the free play of this defective side, before the regenerating power of education has been given time to work, is a menace to the best interests of the island. It is not meant to imply that such must necessarily or immediately be the result of the policy pursued in

Porto Rico, but that instability of administration may arise at any moment from these causes.

From this discussion, regarding the conditions to be considered in the American dependencies in connection with the suffrage problem, it may be seen how varied are the factors in the determination of our new colonial questions. Suffrage is not a thing to be studied separately and apart by itself; it has a natural basis in the physical and industrial conditions of the environment on the one hand, and in the racial characteristics constituting heredity on the other. Any system of suffrage, therefore, which is not based upon these fundamental conditions, must sooner or later prove unsatisfactory if not disastrous. Looked at from this point of view, the idea that abstract or "American" principles *per se* can be imposed upon a newly-acquired territory is seen to be fallacious, and the necessity of permitting local conditions to determine for themselves, to a greater extent, the real content of political institutions, is apparent. We are able to see also the truth of the expression that "democracy is rather a stage of development than a form of political organization." We must abandon the *a priori* solution of the suffrage question and search deeper in the motives governing political action.

In American dependencies, therefore, where the conditions are so different from those on the mainland, the question of applying our political ideas and standards to their inhabitants is a very serious one. Qualities which we take for granted and upon which we build our whole political system are often lacking in the other races. The spirit of compromise, for instance, is undeveloped in the native, and this fact constitutes a serious drawback to popular government. The personal element, also, is continually thrown in the foreground, and individuals, rather than issues, are attacked and defended. Since, therefore, the native is not fully prepared for all our political institutions, we must apply only those which have a prospect of successful operation.

Finally, in weighing the relative value of educational, property and other tests for particular cases, and in considering from a critical standpoint the suffrage qualifications adopted by the United States for its new possessions, there is one point which deserves especial emphasis, viz., the exact nature of the legislative questions immediately confronting the various insular governments. The query, What shall be the suffrage qualifications of voters? in any particular case, is closely related to that other question, Upon what measures is the elected legislature to act? There are epochs in the development of every society, whether colonial or metropolitan, when, in order to avert social shipwreck, the conservative classes must control public policy; but there are also other periods when, to prevent decay or stagnation, it is equally important that the progressive or radical factors of society be allowed free play. At a given moment, the participation of large masses of the people may be a vital necessity to insure the adoption of essential laws, and in such cases the restriction of the suffrage to the ultra conservative classes would be disastrous. The application of this principle is clearly seen in Porto Rico and the Philippines. In Porto Rico the political agitation and unrest, incident to the change from Spanish to American sovereignty, has been slight as compared with the conditions of Cuba and the Philippine Archipelago. The island has not been rent by destructive military factions nor by guerrilla warfare. While there was at one time some disorder and destruction of property, resulting from the popular feeling of hostility towards the large Spanish landholders, yet in the main the propertied classes have been left in possession of their holdings. The reforms which must necessarily be introduced under the American régime would naturally be opposed by some of the large property-holders and advocated by the less favorably situated classes of the population. The impossibility of securing the introduction of these sweeping measures of reorganization, if suffrage had been confined to the most conser-



vative classes, is therefore apparent. The more radical elements of the community may require considerable guidance, and may even present difficulties in the future management of the government, but the services which they have rendered in welcoming the introduction of important legislative measures of vital importance to Porto Rico cannot be forgotten. In the Philippines, on the contrary, a long period of social chaos in extensive portions of the islands has made it impossible for stable political institutions to take firm root. The important need in the archipelago is, therefore, not alone the introduction of governmental reforms, but the general and complete acceptance by all classes of the people of the present régime and the establishment of order. For this purpose the co-operation of the conservative classes is especially essential. Little progress can be made toward the development of the islands until the sympathy and activity of these influential elements of the population are enlisted upon the side of the government. This result is now being obtained, and in order to secure its full realization it would seem especially important to emphasize those qualifications for the suffrage which tend to secure conservatism.

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